

First Edition 500 Copies, August 1968 Reprinted from the Vikram
1000th Anniversary Celebrations Volume (English) p. 377-428

PRICE RS. 2/-

THE MONUMENTS OF THE UDAYAGIRI HILL.

The Geographical Situation of the Hill.—The Udayagiri hill stands four and half miles north-west of the Bhilsa station on the N. E. Main Line of the G. I. P. Railway. At Bhilsa are the headquarters of the district of the same name in Gwalior State.¹ The precise position of the hill is $23^{\circ}.6''$ (Longitude) and $77^{\circ}.8''$ (Latitude).

A metalled road from the town of Bhilsa goes right upto the foot of the hill near its north-east end whence the individual caves are reached partly by a cart-track and partly by a foot-path.² There is a rest-house on the north-east top of the hill maintained by the State Archæological Department which can be used by travellers on payment of nominal fees. •

The caves of Udayagiri (lit. 'mount sun-rise') are one of the several groups of ancient monuments that are situated within a radius of dozen miles about the modern town of Bhilsa. The Sanchi hill with its well-known Buddhist remains lies about four miles south-west

1. See the map (Plate I).

2. See the Site Plan (Plate II).

of the Udayagiri hill while the ancient city site of Vidīśā nearby the present hamlet of Besnagar, famous for the Heliodorus Pillar inscription, is only about two miles to its north-east.

The Ancient Character of the Region in which the Hill is Situated.—The region in which the hill is situated was in ancient times known as Daśārṇa. The name 'Dasanna' of a kingdom famous for its sharp-edged swords is mentioned in one of the early Buddhist canonical works and it is generally identified with the region about modern Bhilsa.¹ This Dasanna is undoubtedly the same as Daśārṇa of the Sanskrit works.² Kautīliya refers to elephants from Daśārṇa as being of middle quality³ and the Epics and the Purāṇas occasionally mention the tribe Daśārṇa frequently associating them with the other tribes such as the Mālavas, the Karuṣhas, the Mekhalas, etc., all of them inhabiting the regions near about the Vindhya.⁴ Kālidāsa⁵ also refers to the country of Daśārṇa with Vidīśā as its chief town on the banks of the river Vetravati (i. e., the modern Betwa). The name Daśārṇa is still preserved in the modern name of the river Dashan which rises in the Bhopal territory and flowing through Bundelkhand empties into the river Betwa.⁶ The rivers Betwa and the Bes, a tributary

1. Mahāśālistana: *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, I, 1064; and Mehta: *Pre-Buddhist India*, 472. It is interesting to note here that in the course of excavations at Besnagar a genuine piece of steel was discovered and it has been found by expert opinion to be the first specimen "of really ancient date" and is thus of "unusual interest especially because of its age. See *Am. Rep. A. S. I.*, 1913-14, 204.

2. See N. De: *Geographical Dictionary of Ancient India* (2nd Ed.), 54.

3. *Arthashastra* (Eng. Trans. by Shamasastry), 49.

4. B. C. Law: *Tribes in Ancient India* (Elandar Oriental Series, No. 4, 1943, —375-7).

5. *Vernes* 25-6.

6. N. De: *Op. cit.*, 54.

of the former, are respectively the same as the Vetravatī¹ and the Vidiśā of the Epics and the Purāṇas.²

The Monuments of Udayagiri and the Ancient city of Vidiśā.—The existence of so many monuments in the neighbourhood of Bhilsa is not due to a mere chance; for nearby the modern town and at the junction of the rivers Bes and Betwa there once stood the famous and populous city of Vidiśā.³ The story of these monuments in the surrounding of Bhilsa, including those at Sanchi, was intimately bound up with the fortunes of this great city on whose wealth and prosperity these monuments were largely dependent for their existence and support. "That the foundations of Vidiśā went back to a very remote age and that its population was a large one in the early centuries of Buddhism is abundantly clear from the extent of its well-defined site as well as from the depth of *debris* that had accumulated there before 2nd century B. C."⁴ It was situated at the junction of the ancient trade routes, one running west to east from the busy sea-ports of the western littoral through Ujjayinī, Kauśāmbī and Kāśī to Pāṭaliputra, and the other south-west to north-east from the Āndhra capital of Pratishṭhāna to Śrāvastī as well as to other cities in Kosala and Pañchāla.⁵ Vidiśā thus enjoyed a good deal of economic progress due to its being an important key-position on the ancient trade routes and naturally the town grew into a big city ex-

1. *Ibid*, 30; and also B. C. Law: *Geographical Essays*, 117.

2. *Vāyu-Purāṇa* (Ānandārama Edition), 45. 80ff.; also B. C. Law: *Op. cit.*, 117.

3. The site of the city has been located near the modern village of Besh (or better known as Besnagar) where excavations were carried by Bhandarkar in 1913-14. For a complete report of these excavations see *An. Rep. ASI*, 1913-14, Pp.186 ff.

4. Marshall: *The Monuments of Sanchi*, I, 2.

5. Rhys Davids: *Buddhist India*, 103; and *Cambridge History of India*, I, 523.

tending from the Udayagiri hill in the west to the confluence of the two rivers in the east, to the northern fringe of the present town of Bhilsa in the south and to the spot where Cunningham dug up the Kalpadruma and the statue of Māyādevī in the north.¹ The Udayagiri hill must have originally formed the western defence line, while the deep rivers flanking its other three sides with their high banks provided a stray defence to the city with an ample supply of water thus assured. Vidiśā was still a prosperous and flourishing city in the days of the early Gupta emperors under whom it was the chief provincial capital of Mālava, but when Chandragupta II shifted the seat of this Viceroyalty to Ujjayinī² Vidiśā gradually faded into insignificance and we hear little of it later on. The caves of the Udayagiri hill are the fruits of the efforts of the citizens of Vidiśā in the last hey-days of her glorious history.

The Topography of the Hill and the Situation of the Caves.—The hill of Udayagiri is about one and half miles in length, its general direction being from south-west to north-east. Its greatest height is about 350 feet at the north-east end near which the caves Nos. 19 and 20³ and the remains of an ancient Gupta

1. With regard to the extent of the site of the city see *Ann. Rep. ASI*, 1913-14, 186; cp. also Kincaid: *Rambles among Ruins in Central India* (IA, XVII), 348.

2. *C. A. S. I.*, Vol. X, 34.

3. Cunningham started his exploration of the hill from this side and proceeded northwards, and he numbered the caves serially in that direction (i. e., from south to north). The Archaeological Department of the State has also followed the same direction in numbering the caves, though the number of caves has been doubled. Cunningham numbered the last cave at the north-east end as 10 while the Department has No. 20 for the same cave. Since the time a metalled road has been constructed meeting the foot of the hill at its north-east. This numbering appears rather confusing and inverted. But for the sake of convenience of established usage and of the chronological implications suggested by the numbering, as will be obvious from the following discussion, the numbering has been preserved as it was.

temple are situated. In the middle the hill is very much depressed and here a narrow passage has been cut through it which was probably once closed by a gate. It is on both sides of this passage that the caves Nos. 8-17 are situated. But some of the most important of the caves (*i. e.*, Nos. 3 and 7) are excavated on the eastern face of the hill just to the south of the passage referred to above. Further south, at a short distance, is the cave No. 2 near which quarrying for stone material has been ceaselessly going on for years as a result of which the hill has received many cuttings. The south-east end of the hill is also comparatively high, though not so much as the north-east end, and on its top is situated the cave No. 1¹. Thus the topography of the hill is not in any way remarkable nor is there anything in its general aspect to distinguish it from the eminences that girdle it close on the west and south.

The Geological Features of the Hill.—As with all the neighbouring off-shoots of the Vindhyan range which here dies down deep into the plateau of Central India, its formation is of sandstone which slopes layer upon layer in shelving masses down its sides wherein the Indian builders of old found a quarry for their work ready at hand.² It is on account of these horizontal lines of cleavage that the large number of caves on the eastern face of the hill have been excavated. There is ample evidence to suggest that the rocks of Udayagiri provided the main supply of building material for the ancient city of Vidiśā³ and the sculptures that are discovered in diggings at the site of the city were apparently carved on the Udayagiri

1. See Site Plan.

2. Marshall: *Monuments of Sanchi*, I, 11.

3. See Cunningham: *Op. cit.*

tion both from ancient writers and modern scholars. The Chinese travellers whose accounts are a mine of information on India's ancient geography pass by in silence even the famous monuments of Sanchi¹ and it is no wonder if our caves did not attract their notice. From modern scholars, too, the caves did not receive the treatment they deserved. This indifference on their part might be due to the existence of the monuments of Sanchi in the vicinity which have pushed these caves to the background. In his *Cave Temples of India* Fergusson did not even refer to the caves though they had already been described by Cunningham in his *Reports*. On the contrary the Udayagiri caves in Orissa have been fully treated by him in the same work.² Even in his later more accomplished work on Indian and Eastern Architecture³ and in its subsequent revised edition by Burgess we do not at all find any reference to our caves. The first descriptive record of the hill and its monuments is found in Cunningham's *Archaeological Survey Reports* for 1874-76⁴ wherein he has described most of the caves and the earlier Buddhist remains traces of which were found by him on the north-eastern top of the hill. His record, however, is not complete and needs revision in many respects. In the same report he had put forth his theory regarding the striking characteristics of Gupta Architecture in connection with the cave No. 1.⁵ After Cunningham the monuments of Udayagiri never received proper attention from scholars and even his theory and account of the

1. Marshall : *Guide to Sanchi* (2nd Edition), Preface, P. v.

2. See P. 55.

3. *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1876); later revised and edited by Burgess in 1910.

4. Vol. X, 46-55.

5. *Ibid*, 60.

Gupta Architecture was entirely passed over by Fergusson and Burgess; while Smith only reproduces Cunningham's main points on the Gupta Architecture without committing himself to any conclusion whatever.¹ The important Gupta inscriptions² in the caves, however, have been fully treated by writers on Gupta history while the famous Varāha scene in the cave No. 5 has been occasionally noticed by scholars on Indian Sculpture³. Thus it will be realised that a complete up-to-date record on the monuments of the Udayagiri hill is a long-felt need.

Description of the Caves³ and their Architectural Features.—Cave No. 1—It consists of a sanctum or a small room 7 feet by 6 feet with the front and one of its sides being built up; the other three sides are hewn out of living rock while the roof is a natural ledge of rock which covers the whole of the temple. In front of the sanctum is a portico 7 feet by 7 feet with four pillars in the front presenting three openings the middle one being 3 feet while the side ones are only one foot each or just one diameter of the pillars. The side walls are prolonged beyond the front of the sanctum and terminate in pillars which are simply monolithic shafts square in section with an opening of $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet each. The pillars in front are simple in design. Their lowest portion at the base is square in section with the portion above it being octagonal above which the shaft is sixteen-sided with the capital carved in simple but beautiful "vase and foliage" pattern. There is character in the shaping

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1. *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon* (2nd. Ed.); cp. also Codrington : *Ancient India*, 58.
 2. Fleet edited the Gupta Inscriptions in the caves in his *Gupta Inscriptions* (*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III); see Pp. 21, 34, 258. See also Bhandarkar : *List of Inscriptions*.
 3. See Cunningham : *ASI*, X, Pp. 48 ff.

of these pillars, for, although heavily proportioned, they are in keeping with the rugged strength of the whole.

Entrance to the cella or sanctum is by a door of plain jambs with the lintel overlapping them. By the sides of the door jambs are miniature pilasters similar in design to the pillars in front. The interior of the cave is quite plain except for the enshrined figure which was originally hewn out of the solid rock of the back wall. It has been roughly chiselled off but the outline of the standing figure can still be discerned under the thin layer of *sindūra* laid thereon by the religious-minded people of the locality.

The local inhabitants call it a *Sūraj-Guphā* (i. e., the cave of the Sun-god), while the Jain community of the region claim it to be an ancient Jain temple. As the enshrined figure has been too damaged to identify it and as there is no inscription in the cave that can enable us to identify it, it is difficult to decide on this point. Cunningham named it as a "false cave temple" because it has been adopted out of a natural ledge of rock which has been made to form the roof both of the cella and its portico and because it is partly rock-cut and partly stone-built.

Cave No. 2.—It is almost near the level of the ground, its dimensions being 7 feet 11 inches by 6 feet 1½ inches. Entrance to it is by a plain rock-cut doorway. It is very much weather-worn and possesses no interest. The cave probably once had a front wall which had long disappeared; but there are traces of two pilasters on the rock, and of a structural portico in the long deep horizontal cutting over the door.

Cave No. 3.—It is an ordinary unfinished cell 8 feet by 6 feet 2 inches. Its inside walls are irregularly

cut. Entrance to it is by a plain rock-cut door-way. No traces of decoration are observed on both the jambs and the lintel which is slightly larger than the breadth of the door-way. The interior is quite plain except for the enshrined image of a male deity carved on the inside wall of the cave opposite the entrance. Traces of two pilasters are still seen on both sides of the door-way and it appears this cave too had a structural portico in its front as the deep horizontal cuttings over both sides of the door would suggest.

Cunningham did not describe this cave and his cave No. 3 is our cave No. 4 to be described immediately.¹

Cave No. 4.—Cunningham has named it as “the Bina cave” from the figure of a man carved on the door-way who is represented as playing on the Indian lute (Viṇā). The cave itself is an ordinary cell cut out of living rock with dimensions 13 feet 11 inches by 11 feet 8 inches. Entrance to the cell or sanctum is through an ornamental rock-cut doorway. The door-jambs consist of four vertical bands of richly carved mouldings the first and third of which are cut deeper into the rock than the other two. The first of them is carved in arabesque foliage almost similar to those found on the carved fragments of door-jambs of the Śiva temple discovered at Bhumara.² The line of carving on the second band is thinner than that of the first one. The decoration here consists of a row of lotus rosettes much similar to the border of lotus rosettes on a lintel of a door-frame of the Śiva temple at Bhumara.³ The other

1. *Op. cit.*

2. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 16, *the Temple of Śiva at Bhumara*, Pl. III, c. d.

3. *Ibid*, Pl. VII, c.

two bands also are carved in ornamental foliage. The lintel is slightly longer than the breadth of the door-way and is divided into four horizontal bands of carved mouldings corresponding to those on the jambs. The decoration on the bands of the jambs is continued on the corresponding bands of the lintel except on the second one of the lintel on which are carved five cusped bosses with small circular panels each containing a figure. In the boss to the left is a man playing the *Vīṇā* (Indian lute) and in the one to the extreme right is a second human figure playing the *Sāraṅgī* (Indian guitar). In the middle one there is a lion and in each of the others a crocodile. On both sides of the door are two figures apparently of *dvārapālas* or door-keepers which are very much disfigured. Beyond them are two pilasters with indistinct bell capitals, their shafts being similar in design to the front pillars in the cave No. 1.

Inside the sanctum there is a *liṅga* with a human face carved on one side. The interior, as in case of the caves described above, is quite plain.

In front of the cave there was originally a structural portico supported on two large pillars in front and two small pillars on each side. The mason's marks of their positions are still visible on the rock. The pillars must have corresponded to the pilasters on the face of the rock referred to above.

On the north-east side the portico leads into another open cave 1 foot $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length and 6 feet $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth standing at right angles with the Bina cave. In it are arranged images of *Ashtaśakti* or the eight female energies, six in front and one at each side. This cave has not been separately numbered either by Cunningham or by the Department.

Cave No. 5.—(Cunningham's Cave No. 4) :—It is simply a large open cutting 22 feet in length, 12 feet 8 inches in height and 3 feet 4 inches in depth. From the architectural point of view there is nothing striking about this cave. Its chief and important feature lies in the famous Varāha incarnation scene carved on the face of its rocky walls (for details see below).

Cave No. 6.—Adjoining the cave No. 5 to its left is the cave No. 6. It has not been numbered separately by Cunningham who describes it along with his cave No. 4. It is well-known from its Gupta inscription of the year 82 of the Gupta Era. It is also otherwise known as the Chandragupta cave or the Sanakānīka cave after the name of the Gupta emperor of the tribe Sanakānīka referred to in the inscription.

The cave proper is 14 feet deep and $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad. The verandah in front is 23 feet 8 inches in length by 5 feet 10 inches in breadth. The door-way is slightly on the southern side of the verandah and is very richly carved. The door jambs are divided into three carved bands of mouldings the middle one of them being slightly raised above the other two. The first band is carved in ornamental foliage much similar to the bands Nos. 3 and 4 of the door-jambs in cave No. 4. The line of carving on the second band which is thinner than the first one seems to represent the trunk of date-palm, a feature which is also observable in the ornamentation on some of the pillars of the Śiva temple at Bhumara.¹ The third band is still thinner than the second one and is decorated in geometrical pattern arranged in small isosceles triangles. The lintel is longer than the breadth of the doorway. It is also divided into five carved bands

1. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 16, *Temple of Śiva at Bhumara*, Pl. IV.

of mouldings three of which correspond to those of the door-jambs and the ornamentation of the latter is continued on the corresponding three bands of the lintel. The fourth band on the lintel represents miniature horse-shoe shaped niches, carving on which consists of vertical and parallel lines while the interspaces are filled in with horizontal line carving. On the fifth band there are three chaitya-window shaped bosses with small circular panels each containing some figure the interspaces being left plain. The panel to the left contains some animal figure probably a lion, while the central one seems to represent a human figure; the third one is very indistinct but it too contained some animal figure as in the first panel. Near the jambs are carved two miniature pilasters with bell capitals. Above each of the two capitals is a small square panel decorated with conventionalised form of a tree at its centre. On both sides of the tree are two seated figures of lions with their fore-legs raised facing opposite sides. Above the square panels are carved the figures of the two river-goddesses standing in graceful posture on their vehicles, the crocodiles. The panels containing these figures are also carved in ornamental foliage.

On each side of the door the face of the rock is divided into five sculptured panels, two to the left and three to the right. The two panels to the left contain two figures, one of a dvārapāla and the other of the god Viṣṇu. The panels on the other side contain three figures, one of a dvārapāla, the other of Viṣṇu and the third of the goddess Mahiṣhamardinī. In addition to these sculptures, there is a crude figure of Gaṇeśa carved on the southern wall of the verandah.

The interior of the cave is plain. The square platform at the centre inside cut out of rock with a hole

at its centre suggests that formerly a *liṅga* stood there. The position of the two figures of the god *Vishṇu* near the *dvārapālas* and the sculptures of *Gaṇeśa* and *Mahishamardīnī* outside the sanctum would also support the suggestion that the cave was originally dedicated to the god *Śiva*. Several short inscriptions are found on the ceiling of the cave.

Adjoining the present cave and at right angles to it there is another open cave similar to that near the cave No. 4. It is $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length and 3 feet in depth. It also contains the sculptures of the *Ashta-śakti* or the eight female energies, six in front and two on both sides carved on rock surface. The existence of these sculptures is an additional proof that the cave No. 6 was originally dedicated to the god *Śiva*. There is another open cutting to the left of this open recess but it possesses no interest.

Cave No. 7.—At a short distance to the left of the cave No. 6 there is almost an isolated mass of rock hewn into the shape of a hemi-spherical *stūpa* with a square base. It is crowned by a large and flat stone, which, from its likeness to a gigantic *tawā* or "griddle" for baking cakes, has suggested to the local inhabitants its present name the "*Tawā Cave*". In the lower face to its north there is a door leading to a room 13 feet 10 inches long by 11 feet 9 inches broad. From an inscription on the back wall of the cave it would appear to have been excavated under the orders of the minister of *Chandragupta* himself. The rock is now very much dilapidated outside but the former existence of a portico is proved by the long hollow above the entrance which once received the edge of the roofing slab. The entrance to the sanctum is through a crude rock-cut doorway without any ornamentation whatsoever. At its

two sides, however, are two weather-worn figures of dvārapālas or door-keepers very much similar to those in cave No. 6 described above.

The interior of the cave is quite plain except that its ceiling is decorated with a conventionalised lotus flower 4 feet and 6 inches in diameter. From the rock-cut platform at the centre of the cave it appears that the cave was originally dedicated to the god Śiva. The inscription in the cave expressly states that the cave was dedicated to the god Śambhu.

From cave No. 7 one has to go west along a passage cut through the hill on which there are a number of small cuttings or niches (Nos. 8-16) cut on the rock surface. They are, in fact, very small caves or cells and have been separately numbered by the Department. Cunningham did not number them as separate caves and described them only summarily. Only the sculpture of Śeṣhaśāyī Viṣṇu attracted his attention (No. 13).

Cave No. 8.—It is an ordinary open cutting 10 feet 10 inches in length and 2 feet 4 inches deep at its right and 4 feet 8 inches deep at its left side. There is no sculpture or carving in the cave.

Cave No. 9.—It is a small rectangular cell 3 feet 8 inches by 3 feet 4 inches with an elevated pedestal at the back wall cut out of rock supporting the enshrined image. The image is a standing figure of the four-armed god Viṣṇu resembling very closely the representation of that god in the cave No. 6. The head of the figure has been lost.

Cave No. 10.—It is an irregularly cut small cell 2 feet 10 inches by 2 feet 8 inches. As in the preceding cave here also is a pedestal supporting an image of Viṣṇu exactly similar to the Viṣṇu in cave No. 9.

Cave No. 11.—This is also a small rectangular cell 4 feet 3 inches by 3 feet 3 inches with a pedestal and an image of Vishṇu inside exactly as in the preceding cave.

Cave No. 12.—It is a small open cutting or niche with the enshrined figure carved on the face of the rock inside. The figure is that of the god Vishṇu resembling closely the figure in the preceding caves. Below the niche near both the corners are seen two figures of dvārapālas very much weather-worn and indistinct. On the rock opposite there is a similar small niche with a very much damaged sculpture inside.

Cave No. 13.—It is a large open cutting, similar to the cave No. 5, with the colossal sculpture of Śeṣhaśāyī Vishṇu carved on its rock surface. The figure measures 12 feet in length.

Caves Nos. 14-15.—They are ordinary square cells without any sculptures inside. Their respective dimensions are : 7 feet by 7 feet and 4 feet by 4 feet.

Cave No. 16.—It is a square cell 6 feet 9 inches by 6 feet 9 inches. Excepting a rock-cut platform with a hole at its centre meant for a liṅga the interior is quite plain. Entrance to it is by a rock-cut door-way. The jambs and lintel of the door are divided into two lines of mouldings without any ornamentation whatsoever. Unlike the door-frames in some of the other caves the lintel here does not project beyond the ends of the jambs.

Cave No. 17.—Cunningham numbered this as the cave No. 8 and he called it by the local name *Ṭhāṭ*. The sanctum is 10 feet 10 inches by 10 feet. There is a rock-cut platform with a liṅga standing at its centre. Entrance to the sanctum is by an ornamental

way which has been too damaged and weather-worn to make out the details of carvings on its jambs and lintel. Traces of miniature pilasters forming part of the decoration on the door-frame supporting the figures of river-goddesses, as in the cave No. 6, can still be noticed. Just as in the preceding cave here, too, the lintel does not prolong beyond the ends of jambs. There are considerably damaged figures of two dvārapālas on both sides of the door. To the right of the door is a niche containing a figure of Gaṇeśa and to the left is another niche containing a figure of the goddess Mahishamardini. These figures and the liṅga inside clearly indicate that the cave was originally dedicated to the god Śiva. A damaged sculpture of a bull, the vehicle of Śiva, is still lying at the entrance of the cave.

Cave No. 18.—It is an ordinary rectangular cell 9 feet by 7 feet. It was originally open on one side but afterwards two stone slabs have been fixed at the opening offering a narrow entrance of one foot wide to the cell. There is no other striking feature about this cave. Cunningham did not give it a separate number.

Cave No. 19.—Cunningham numbered it as his cave No. 9. He named it as "the Amṛita Cave" after the scene of the Amṛita-manthana story carved above its entrance. It is the largest of the Udayagiri caves, being 22 feet long and 19 feet 4 inches broad. The roof is supported by four massive pillars 8 feet high and 1 foot 7 inches square also hewn out of the living rock. They have richly ornamented capitals but instead of the usual turn-overs at the four corners they have four horned and winged animals standing upright on their hind legs and touching their mouths with the forefeet. The shaft proper has the same design as in case of the pillars in the cave No. 1, *i. e.*, it is square in section at

the base with the portion above it being octagonal above which it is sixteen-sided. The roof differs from those of the other caves as it is divided into nine square panels by the architraves crossing over the four pillars.

The doorway of the cave is also more extensively ornamented than that of any of the other. The door jambs are divided into three bands of richly carved mouldings the first of which is decorated in ornamental foliage. The second band has a standing female figure at its base above which it is divided into seven small square panels. Out of these seven panels Nos. 1, 3, 5 and 7 are carved in ornamental foliage while each of the rest contains a pair of human figures possibly females; and these figures are too indistinct to make out their significance. Above the panels is carved a beautiful scene representing a man riding a horse with his back towards the door, the horse having its forelegs raised indicating its high speed. The third band has a flying gāṇa at its base with a human figure carved in a niche above it. Above the human figure is a decorated square panel forming the base of the pilaster above it. In design the pilasters closely resemble the pillars inside the cave. They support the figures of the two river-goddesses standing in graceful postures on their vehicles as in cave No. 6. The figures are very much weather-worn and have some additional features such as the dwarf attendants not found in cave No. 6. As in cave No. 6, here, too, the lintel is longer than the breadth of the doorway. It is also divided into three bands of carved mouldings corresponding to those of the jambs. The decoration on its first band is a continuation of that on the corresponding band of the door jamb. The second band is divided into square panels similar to the corresponding second of the

- (b) The lintel overlaps the door joints and is prolonged beyond its ends.
- (c) There is no śikhara or spire as the roof is flat.
- (d) Peculiar decorative *motifs* such as the two figures of the river-goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā carved on the door-frame and the kīrti-mukha and chaitya window designs.

Out of the twenty caves of the Udayagiri hill Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 16, 17 and 19 only show distinct features of architectural value. The rest of the caves are simple cuttings and are architecturally of little consequence and hence may be left out of this discussion. Amongst the caves enumerated above Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 19 have their plans as stated in the characteristic (a) noted above except for the path of circumambulation the absence of which in Udayagiri might be due to the natural limitation offered by the rock. The caves Nos. 16 and 17, however, do not show any trace of the former existence of a porch in their front. The lintels overlap the door-joints in all the caves (excepting 16 and 17) where there are door-frames; and the question of Śikhara or spire does not arise. Amongst these caves themselves (except Nos. 2, 3, 7, 16 and 17 which again are of little significance for further discussion as there are no other striking features about them) certain marked changes are observable as we proceed with them in their serial order. The cave No. 1 is the most simple and primitive in appearance. It has no door ornamentation and the design of its pillars is simple but impressive as compared with those of the structural examples. The pillars here are arranged in almost a similar manner as in the Gupta temple at Sanchi on the construction of which Marshall

has lavished high praise.¹ Indeed in point of general appearance these two temples and their pillar designs are so similar that the one can easily be mistaken for the other.² As we go to the other caves Nos. 4, 6 and 19 we observe that the shrines become larger and more ornate, the cells appear more spacious and the simple porch assumes in the cave No. 19 the appearance of a pillared hall. A stage in the process is seen in the cave No. 4 known as the Bina cave, where in addition to the four pillars forming the front of the portico there are two small pillars on either side. The cave No. 19 represents a still further stage as it is the largest and the latest of the entire series. Its cella is more spacious and its portico has become almost a large maṇḍapa or pillared hall, which according to Bhandarkar might be considered to be a later addition to the original porch of the earlier excavated main shrine out of the materials of the structural Gupta temple on the hill above some time before the tenth century A. D.³ All the cave temples of Udayagiri thus retain the essential characteristics of the Gupta style of architecture and show nothing that can be characterised as post-Gupta.

It is, however, the decorative features of the door-frames in the caves which lend more significance to their relative antiquity as amongst themselves and as compared with the structural examples. In this respect also we find the art of decoration progressively changing as we proceed with the caves in their serial order. In the cave No. 4 the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā do not at all appear on the door-frame, the decoration on which consists of simple ornamental foliage in addition to the

1. *Guide to Sanchi*, 117.

2. *Ibid.*, Pl. VII.

3. *Annual Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, for the year ending in 31st March, 1915*, 65.

five cusped bosses with small circular panels containing figures. In the cave No. 6, however, the door ornamentation becomes more elaborate. Here we find the figures of the river-goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā standing gracefully on their vehicles, not on the base of the door jambs, as in the structural examples, but on the bracket formed by the projecting portion of the overhanging lintel and the upper ends of the jambs. Again, these figures here do not, strictly speaking, form an essential part of the door ornamentation. They are supported by pilasters which too do not appear as part of the decoration of the door-frame. They are merely decorative appendages to the door-frame still betraying their original function as can be deduced from their position in the cave No. 4 where they are cut out of the face of the rock at a distance from the door, while in the cave No. 3 they actually correspond to the pillars of its portico. (It is thus really interesting that in these three caves we have clear traces of the gradual evolution of the pilaster into a decorative *motif*.) In the structural temples this *motif* is further developed for the pilaster is there supported by winged animals a feature which has not still found its place in the cave No. 6. The chaitya window *motif* is however present on the door-frame of this cave but not in a fully stylised form. It is in the cave No. 19 that we find 'all the above *motifs* fully developed. The pilaster becomes part of the ornamentation on the door-frame. The other notable advance is in the panels containing figure sculptures on the lower portion and on the middle band of the door jambs, as noticed in the structural examples particularly at Bhumara.¹ The position of the figures of the two river-goddesses is still the same as in the cave No. 6; but they are here

1. *Op. cit.*, Pl. III, a.

accompanied by some figure compositions such as the dwarf attendants. It has been suggested that "in the earlier examples the goddesses (*i. e.*, river-goddesses) are placed at the top and in the later at the bottom of the jambs."¹ Thus from the view-point of style the main shrine of this cave falls in line with the early Gupta temples such as those at Bhumara and Nachna Kuthara, though the absence of the *kīrti-mukha* and *chaitya* window *motifs* and the comparatively simpler function and position of the figures of the river-goddesses at the top of the door jambs may push its date slightly earlier.

The Sculptures in the Caves.—Cave No. 1.—The only sculpture in this cave is the indistinct enshrined figure of a standing image inside the sanctum. It is very difficult to identify it as the layer of *sindūra* on it has completely concealed its distinctive features if it had any.

Cave No. 3.—Here too the only sculpture is the enshrined figure of a standing deity inside. It has a *danḍa* in the right hand. The left hand is damaged but it is certainly rested on the hip as the damaged portion would indicate. The image has only two hands and wears a loin-cloth covering the secret part of the body, armlets, a simple but ornamented necklace, and a turban-like head-dress with its tufts coming down. These are the only personal embellishments of the image. It is probably an image of the god Skanda *Kārttikēya* as the *danḍa* and the position of the hands would indicate.

The god Skanda *Kārttikēya* is mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions,² and the name of the cave is

1. Smith: *History of Fine Arts in India*, vol. II, p. 100.

2. Gopinath Rao: *Hindu Temple Architecture*, vol. II, p. 100.

3. *Bulletin of the Deccan College*, Dec. 1907, p. 100.

deities of the Gupta age. A temple dedicated to this god in the Gupta period has been found at Bilsad in Etah district.¹ The names Kumāragupta and Skandagupta of the Gupta emperors,² the laudations of the court-poets of Kumāragupta comparing him with that god, and the type of coin, with a king feeding a peacock, the vehicle of the god, on the obverse, struck by Kumāragupta³ are the points that testify to the popularity of the god Skanda in the Gupta period. A panel containing a figure of Kārttikeya in a medallion seated on his vehicle, the peacock, has been discovered at Bhumara.⁴ The god here has only one face and two hands, one of which holds a daṇḍa just as in the case of our figure. A comparison of the Bhumara figure with that at Udayagiri which has no vehicle and is thus simple and free from symbolism would suggest that the latter is earlier than the former.

Cave No. 4.—Excepting the figures of human beings and animals in the circular panels on the lintel of the doorway and the very much damaged figures of the two door-keepers or dvārapālas on both sides of the entrance and the Ekamukha liṅga in the sanctum, there are no other sculptures in the cave. In the open cave to the right are the sculptures of the Ashta-śakti or the eight female energies; but they are so severely damaged that nothing can be made out of them.

1. *Ibid*, Appendix No. 73; see also Fleet: *Op. cit.*, 43-5.

2. According to some scholars the birth of Kumāragupta was commemorated through the composition of *Kumārasambhava* by Kālidāsa who was, according to the same theory, a court-poet of the Gupta emperor Chandragupta II; see Dandekar: *A History of the Guptas*, 101; also Raychaudhuri: *Political History of Ancient India* (4th Ed.), 478, fn. 3.

3. Allan: *Catalogue of Coins*, cxxxiii.

4. *Op. cit.*, 12, Pl. XIII, c. d.

The *Ekamukha* liṅga, *i. e.*, liṅga with one face carved on it, in the sanctum is 2 feet 5 inches in height and one foot 2 inches in diameter. The face is round and not elongated. The arrangement of hair is the most striking feature of this sculpture. The top-knot, *i. e.*, an Ushnīṣha, is in the centre on the head shown tied round with a fillet (?) with the hair curling out of the knot and some of them flowing in locks down on the shoulders. The third eye graces the central portion of the forehead. The eyes are more or less elongated and the nose has been considerably damaged. The only decoration on the figure is an ornamental necklace inset with a diamond at the centre. On the whole, the execution of the face is not very successful and betrays some sort of hesitation on the part of its sculptor.

Ekamukha liṅga sculptures belonging to the Gupta period have been found at Khoh,¹ Bhumara,² Shankar-gadh,³ Benares and Allahabad.⁴ The one at Khoh is the best amongst them and is one of the finest specimens of the Gupta art. These *Ekamukha* liṅgas appear to have been very common in the Gupta period, particularly in the city of Benares.⁵ The other representations on the liṅga such as the *Chaturmukha* liṅgas (*i. e.*, having four faces on them) belong to a later period as they are rarely found amongst Gupta sculptures.⁶ As compared with the one-faced liṅgas elsewhere the one in our cave is certainly unique. The only peculiarity of this figure that can lead us to presume that it represents the

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1. *Annual Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, for the year ending in 31st March 1920*, 106, Pl. XXIX.
 2. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 16, P. 5, Pl. XV, c.
 3. *Annual Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, for the year ending in 31st March 1920*, 104-5, Pl. XXVIII.
 4. Banerji: *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, 115.
 5. *Ibid.*
 6. *Ibid.*

Brāhmagical god Śiva is the third eye on the forehead; otherwise there is nothing Śaivite on it. In fact, leaving aside the third eye, it reminds us more of Buddha than of Śiva. In the similar sculptures from Bhumara, Khon . etc., we notice the crescent on the knot of the matted locks of the image and the hair arrangement also is quite different. At Bhumara the god wears a jewelled crown. There is thus reason to believe that we have here a product of a different school altogether betraying, to a certain extent, the influence of the Gandhāra art, probably *via* Mathurā, as can be deduced particularly from the arrangement of the hair, and that it is the earliest example of the kind so far known.

Cave No. 5.—From the sculptural point of view this is the most important of the Udayagiri caves because of the famous Varāha incarnation scene contained in it. It has been briefly described by Cunningham in his report.¹

The Varāha is here represented in the animal-human form as a man with a boar's head. The figure has only two hands. With his left foot, he treads upon the coils of the Nāga king who is represented with a canopy of thirteen snakes' heads, seven in front and six in the intervals behind. The Nāga king is shown as wearing a jewelled necklace. There is a peculiar poise and elasticity observable in this as well as in the kneeling headless figure behind it who may perhaps be the ocean-king himself.² The posture in which the figure of Varāha is shown standing breathes vigour and confidence and betrays no hesitation on the part of the god in carrying out the cosmic mission of rescuing the earth-goddess from out of the deep waters. His right hand

1. See Pr. 45-9.

2. *William Coom: Indische Plastik, Tafels 22-3.*

rests on his hip and his left on his knee. With his right tusk he raises the slender figure of *Prithvī*, the earth personified, from out of the deep waters shown by the long undulating and wavy lines on the background of the rock. The gigantic proportions of the body of *Varāha* are indicated by his elephantine legs and arms and by a huge serpentine garland adorning the figure—a feature quite in keeping with the majesty of the author of such a cosmic event. The delicately carved tiny figure of the goddess *Prithvī* emphasizes the contrast more effectively. The face of the goddess has been very much damaged and the only embellishments on her body are the anklets and the jewelled chains that girdle round the secret parts of her otherwise naked frame. There is a peculiar grace and elasticity in the portrayal of her breasts which are shown rather prominently and of the serpentine movement of her body posed lightly on the left shoulder of her Saviour and grasping the dreadful snout caressingly. To the left of the Boar's head there are some of the heavenly musicians and to the right and left are four lines of figures filling the whole background of the composition. Amongst them *Brahmā* can be recognised by his beard and *Śiva* by his vehicle, the bull, and the other gods with haloes round their heads. Another line is occupied apparently by *Asuras* or demons and a third line by the bearded *Rishis*.

On the right and left sides of the niche the sculptor has portrayed the descent of the Ganges and the Jumna from the heavens to the sea. The left hand composition is more completely executed. Here on the upper portion the heavens are shown by the flying *Devas* while just below them are seen a group of five *Apsaras*, the one at the centre, dancing and the others play-

musical instruments such as the Indian guitar, the flute and the *mṛidaṅga*. On both sides of this group of dancers are seen the wavy lines representing the torrential flow of the two streams, personified as Gaṅgā and Yamunā by the two female figures just underneath the group of Apsarases and just above the meeting-point of the two streams. The figure of Gaṅgā stands on a crocodile and that of Yamunā on a tortoise. The representations of the two animals symbolising the vehicles of the respective goddesses are singularly appropriate, for the Ganges swarms with crocodiles and the Jumna teems with tortoises. Both the river-goddesses are holding water vessels apparently in obeisance to the god Varāha. The two rivers then join together and enter the sea where they are received by the god of ocean (*i. e.*, Varuṇa) who is represented as standing in the water above his knees and holding a *kalāṣa* in his hands. The figure wears a simple *mukuta*, a necklace, a loin-cloth and an upper garment.

The story of the Varāha avatāra as narrated in the different Purāṇas falls into two distinct categories.¹ In the first a cosmic event is depicted in which the deity lifts up the earth from out of the deep ocean with his powerful tusk. Our sculpture satisfies this category of description to a greater extent. In the second the story is more mythological than cosmological in content, for here the god is represented as killing the demon Hiranyāksha who is stated to have been continuously harassing the gods and the earth. This version of the story belongs to the later Purāṇas and none of the Gupta sculptures, so far known, represents it.

The worship of the incarnations of Viṣṇu appears to have become common in Gupta

1. *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, II, 160.

times.¹ The most important of the incarnations to be so worshipped was Varāha who was the popular deity of the period whose sculptures have been found amongst the ruins of the age. There are also inscriptional references to setting up of temples in honour of the god.² Amongst the sculptures two forms of Boar have been noted: (1) a man with a boar's head and (2) a four-footed realistic pachyderm bearing on its bushy body numerous figures of gods and demi-gods.³ The only notable example of the first kind belonging to the Gupta period is the Udayagiri Varāha. Similar sculptures belonging approximately to the immediate post-Gupta period have been found in southern India at Badami in the Bijapur district of the Bombay Presidency⁴ and at Mahabalipuram in the Madras Presidency.⁵ In these figures, however, we find the god having four hands and his sculptures follow, more or less, the rules laid down by the authors of the early works on Śilpaśāstra.⁶ The Udayagiri Varāha, on the contrary, is absolutely free from such an influence, has only two hands and breathes freshness and vigour peculiar to it. Instances of the second kind have been found from Eran and Bilhari in Central Provinces⁷ and from Khoh in Nagod State in Central India,⁸ but we are not concerned with them here.

1. Banerji: *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, 122.

2. *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, II, 160.

3. Banerji: *Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculpture* (Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, Vol. XLVII), 104.

4. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 25, 36, Pl. IX, b.

5. *Ibid*, No. 33, 31, Pl. XXI, a.

6. Gopinath Rao: *Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part I.

7. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 23, Pl. XXXVII.

8. *Annual Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, for the year ending in March 31, 1920*, Pl. XXIX.

The peculiarity of the Varāha of Udayagiri is the accompanying scene of the descent of the Ganges and the Jumna, which is not found elsewhere in such an association nor do the Purāṇic stories of the incarnation¹ and the relevant rules of the Śilpaśāstras² suggest it. The appropriateness of this scene in the setting of the cosmic event need not be emphasised. The god of ocean (*i. e.*, Varuṇa) must pay his respects to the author of the cosmic action, for, it was within his jurisdiction that the event was taking place and it naturally follows that his 'wives', the two rivers, so sacred to the people of Āryāvarta must accompany him in such a devout act.³ It may be further suggested that here is a geographical conception blended with the representation of the cosmic event.⁴ The people of the Madhyadeśa who draw their life-blood from the two rivers and their tributaries are here paying their homage to the god through the personifications of Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

There is a view propounded by Jayaswal⁵ that the Varāha incarnation scene at Udayagiri represents a historical event allegorically portrayed. The Bharata-vākya in Viśākhadatta's fragmentary drama called "Devīchandraguptam" expresses an analogy between the god Viṣṇu and the Gupta emperor Chandragupta

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1. *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, II, 160.
 2. Gopinath Rao : *Op. cit.*
 3. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara* "to the right and left respectively of Varuṇa should be standing the river-goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā", the former on Matsya or Makara (*i. e.*, fish or crocodile) and the latter on tortoise; see Gopinath Rao : *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, Part II, Pp. 530-1. According to the same authority, however, the iconographical characteristics of Varuṇa are different from those of the Udayagiri Varuṇa except that the latter holds a vessel in his hands as is also laid down by that work.
 4. See *Nāgarī-Prachārīṇī-Patrikā* (*Vikrama Special Volume*), Vol. 48, Pp. 47-8.
 5. *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, XVIII, 33-6.

II, the former rescuing the goddess of earth out of the cosmic depth and the latter rescuing the queen Dhruvasvāminī (wife of Chandragupta's elder brother) from the clutches of a daring Śaka king who had put to disgrace his elder brother Rāmagupta. It is further claimed that the sculptor of the Varāha scene at Udayagiri closely followed this imagery of Viśākhadatta who "might have himself directed the drawing".¹ There is, however, no direct evidence for such an interpretation; for the cave has no inscription and the inscription in the nearby cave does not support such a contention.²

Cave No. 6.—The sculptures in this cave are those of the two dvārapālas of the two figures of Viṣṇu, of the goddess Mahisha-mardinī (killer of the buffalo-demon), and of Gaṇeśa. The sculptures of the two river-goddesses on the door-frame of the cave have already been noted.

The dvārapālas are armed with axes and with small crescent blades of long shafts upon which they lean, one hand on hip. The treatment of the *dhoti* is beautifully accomplished. It spreads behind in fauned-out bows and falls in folds between the legs. Under it a garment new to India is worn, a form of short tight-fitting drawers. The hair is fantastically dressed in bushy wig-like fashion, falling from two partings on either side of the head. The pose is easy and the naked body and arms suavely represented with perfect anatomical technique. One leg is bent and the body is slightly flexed at the waist. The features, as far as can be seen,

1. *Ibid.*, 35.

2. An interesting suggestion has been made that the coins of Chandragupta II and the dvārapāla sculptures in the cave No. 6 at Udayagiri would indicate that long locks of hair were worn by the aristocracy and that Chandragupta II might have thus facilitated his disguise as a woman and succeeded in rescuing Dhruvasvāminī in this way; see Dandekar : *A History of the Guptas*, P. 75, fn. 1.

are of the open-eyed traditional type.¹ The only ornaments on the figures are the armlets and necklaces. Unfortunately the dvārapālas in the cave No. 4 are very severely damaged; otherwise a comparison and contrast between them and the dvārapālas in this cave would have proved interesting. Still the difference in their head-dress is a feature worth noting.

Of the two figures of Vishṇu the one to the right of the entrance is smaller than the other to its left. Both of them represent a standing Vishṇu (Vāsudeva-sthānaka-mūrti). The right-hand figure is armed with a heavy ringed club. To his left is the chakra mounted on a drum-like base. The second figure has suffered more at the hands of the iconoclasts but is obviously a Vishṇu of the same type. He has two small attendant figures on either side. A portion of the damaged chakra is still seen to his left while the club is missing. Both the figures are four-armed and it is to be noted that the upper arms are treated anatomically, the lower arms being symmetrically stretched out to support the symbols in a mechanical disjointed way, as mere accessories.² The sculptors had not to work according to the regulations laid down by authorities on Śilpaśāstra of whose existence they probably knew nothing. The jewellery of these figures consists of a garland, armlets and necklace very simply treated. The images, however, betray a certain amount of stilted and stiff expression not observed in the other caves. From an inscription on a panel above one of these figures it can be stated with certainty that they, as well as the dvārapālas, belong to the date mentioned in the inscription, *i. e.*, 402 A. D.³

1. Codrington : *Op. cit.*, 60.

2. *Ibid.*, 60.

3. See P. 46 below.

The figure of Mahisha-mardinī (*i. e.*, the goddess Durgā killing the buffalo-demon or Mahishāsura) is considerably damaged. She is shown as having twelve arms some of which have been broken. In one of them she holds a kind of small sword and in the other a shield. In two of the other hands she holds an arrow and a bow. The surviving parts of a broken trident or triśūla can still be seen the end of which is shown pierced into the body of the buffalo-demon who is here represented in his purely animal form. With her foot the goddess is shown treading upon the head of the buffalo and with one of her hands she holds one of the hind legs of the demon. The only ornaments on her body are armlets, anklets and a necklace.

The worship of the goddess Durgā and the Seven Mothers¹ was fairly common in the Gupta period, as the relevant references in the Gupta inscriptions would suggest.² A sculptured panel of Mahisha-mardinī Durgā has been discovered at Bhumara³; but the goddess here has only four arms. A similar sculpture of Durgā with four arms is found also in the Badami caves⁴ in Bombay Karnataka belonging to about the beginning of the 7th century A. D. In the beginning of Śākta worship this goddess was worshipped in her normal forms such as having two or four arms only.⁵ It is probably on this ground that our sculpture has been called medieval, *i. e.*, belonging to a period later than that of the original

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1. Two sculptures of the Seven Mothers are found at Udayagiri in the caves Nos. 4 and 6. In the latter cave they are associated with the goddess Durgā under discussion. Since both the sculptures of the Seven Mothers are very much damaged they have not been described and discussed here.
 2. Salctore : *Life in Gupta Age*, 508.
 3. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 16, P. 13, Pl. XIV.
 4. *Op. cit.*, No. 25, P. 4, Pl. II, b.
 5. Banerji : *Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculpture*, 114.

excavation of the cave in 402 A. D.¹ Except that the goddess has twelve arms there is nothing in the sculpture to prove its later date particularly because of the animal form of the demon who in the 7th century sculpture at Mahabalipuram and in sculptures of later period is represented in an animal-human form.²

The figure of Gaṇeśa in the cave is very crudely carved. It is shown nude and its elephantine face is very prominently shown suggesting the primitive feature of god. There are no ornaments on the body of the figure which appears to be absolutely free from symbolism.

"Gaṇeśa is not to be found in sculptures before the Gupta period, when his image appeared not only suddenly but in the classic form by which he may be identified from the 5th century upto the present day".³ "An image of Gaṇeśa which was found in the Fatehgarh district and is believed to have come originally from the Saṅkīśā mound may be the most ancient representation of the god in stone as yet discovered."⁴ The crudeness of this figure of Gaṇeśa can be very favourably compared with our Udayagiri Gaṇeśa: both are shown naked. In the Gupta sculpture from Bhumara, however, the figure of Gaṇeśa indicates a definite advance in the estimation and understanding of the god who is there represented in his classic form.⁵ From the position of our Gaṇeśa in the cave in a crude niche on one of its sides and from the crudeness of the execution of his figure it appears the god is here struggling into promi-

1. Codrington : *Op. cit.*, 60.

2. At Bhumara and Badami also the demon is in animal form.

3. Getty : *Gaṇeśa*, 25.

4. *Ibid*, 26, Pl. II, a.

5. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 16, 13, Pl. XV, ab.

nence out of his primitive obscurity. The importance of our figure in the history of Gaṇeśa's divinity will thus be readily recognised particularly because of the Gupta inscription in the cave of 402 A. D. to which date this Gaṇeśa can be safely assigned.

Cave No. 7.—There are only two sculptures in the cave, those of the dvārapālas at the entrance; but they are so severely damaged that they cannot be described here. What can still be discerned from the broken parts of the figures is that they were probably very much similar to the door-keepers in the preceding cave No. 6.

Cave No. 9.—The enshrined image inside the cave is that of standing Viṣṇu whose head has been lost. The figure closely resembles the Viṣṇu in the cave No. 6 in all points of details except in its size.

Cave No. 10.—Here too the enshrined image is of the standing god Viṣṇu exactly similar to the figure in the preceding cave No. 9.

Cave No. 11.—Here also the enshrined image is that of the god Viṣṇu closely resembling the figures of the god in the preceding two caves.

Cave No. 12.—As in the preceding caves, here, too, we have the figure of standing Viṣṇu in the cell, closely resembling the figures above. In addition, there are two figures of dvārapālas carved on both sides just below the niche. They are too weather-worn and indistinct to be described here.

It will be obvious that all these sculptures of Viṣṇu in the caves Nos. 9-12 are contemporaneous with the Viṣṇu figures in the cave No. 6, *i. e.*, they belong to a date about 402 A. D.

compartments, containing the twelve Ādityas or Suns, the twelve Rāṣis or zodiacal signs and the twenty-seven Nakshatras denoted by pellets. From the remains of this pillar and a complete rail-bar noticed by Cunningham elsewhere on the hill it is obvious that Udayagiri also, like Sanchi, once possessed a great Buddhist stūpa which according to Cunningham was probably despoiled by "the Brāhmanical persecutors of the neighbouring city of Bhilsa".¹ Traces of a stūpa were, however, actually discovered in the course of excavations on the hill by Bhandarkar in the year 1914.

After Cunningham Mr. Lake, the Superintending Engineer of the State, thinking that the mound near the pillar contained ruins of a stūpa, sunk a trial trench at its centre. In November 1913 D. R. Bhandarkar visited the place and was of the opinion that the mound did not indicate any remains of a stūpa but still he preferred to excavate it and started operations in February 1914. It was after a year that he succeeded in exposing a platform approximately 118 feet long and 70 feet wide. On this platform once a temple stood, probably of the later Gupta period, facing east. On the north and south sides of the platform were exposed three subsidiary shrines. "But in the *debris* surrounding its fragments of door jambs, door lintels and roof slabs were found in large quantities from which it is possible to imagine what the temple was like originally. No pieces of the spire, however, came to light and it seems that it was a flat-roofed structure like other temples of the Gupta period."² Bhandarkar further opines that "deliberate attempts were made to lay waste this holy site, for otherwise

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Annual Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle* for the year ending in March 1915, 65.

the wholesale destruction of the temple, its attendant shrines and the column is inexplicable. It is not difficult to determine approximately the time when this must have come off. In front of the Amṛita cave (No. 19 above) are standing a few pillars which are now the only remnants of a porch that was constructed before it. These are exactly like those unearthed on the site of its temple. A little excavation here brought to light other fragments of sculptures and roof-slabs convincing us that its porch was built at some later period and unquestionably out of the materials of the Gupta temple on the hill-top. This temple must, therefore, have been in ruins, when the cave porch was put up. Now, in the Amṛita cave there is an inscription dated V. S. 1093 (*i. e.*, A. D. 1036-37) which speaks of the cave temple being restored by one Kaṇha. There are absolutely no indications of reconstruction in the cave proper. The restoration must thus refer to the installation of an image in the cave and the building of the porch before it. As most of the materials used for the latter were, as just remarked, brought from the remains of the Gupta temple above, the devastation of this structure must have taken place prior to A. D. 1037.

The inner core of the temple platform is not a solid mass of stone construction as might be expected but a network of rubble stone walls packed dry, the intervening spaces being filled with well-rammed brick-bats. Most of these hollows were cleared with a view to expose remains of any structure that might have stood on this spot anterior to the building of the temple. Nothing of a sensational character was brought to light but enough was found to justify the conclusion that the site was occupied by the stūpa at least and some dwel-

ling houses of the pre-Gupta, perhaps of the Śunga, period. Traces of the first were exposed below the east wall of the platform. In fact, this wall, when constructed, was made to stand upon the two lower-most stone courses of a stūpa. From its segment now preserved the original diameter of its base seems to have been at least 16 feet 8 inches. Indications of dwelling houses were traceable all along the north wall of the platform, especially at the north-west corner. These consisted of a layer of ashes intermixed with iron nails topped by another of tile pieces, both running together all round in undulations showing that the houses here were of wooden construction.”¹

The Inscriptions of the Udayagiri Caves.—There are in all twelve inscriptions at Udayagiri, of which only four are important, the other eight, some of which are merely fragmentary and illegible, being devoid of historical interest.

The inscription² in the cave No. 6 of the Gupta Era 82 is the earliest dated inscription of the Gupta period. Its historical importance lies in the fact that it proves that practically the whole of north-eastern Malwa was conquered by Chandragupta II before 402 A. D.³ It further shows that the region was then ruled by a chief of the Sanakānīka tribe, who styled himself as *Mahārāja*, owing allegiance to the Gupta emperor. It should be

1. *Ibid*, 65-6.

2. See Bhandarkar : *List of Inscriptions in Northern India*, No. 1260. The inscription reads as follows:—

(L. 1) सिद्धम् ॥ संवत्सरे ८०२ आपादमासे शुक्ले (कलै) कादद्यां परम-
महाराकमहाराजावि[राज]श्रीचन्द्र[गु]प्तपादानुव्यातस्य

(L. 2) महाराजछगलगौत्रस्य महाराजविष्णुदासपुत्रस्य सनकानीकस्य मह
[राज].....[द] लस्यायं देयवर्मः ॥

3. Cp. Banerji : *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, 31.

noted that the name of this tribe is mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta testifying that the region was occupied by the tribe for a longer period.

Another inscription¹ belonging to the reign of the same king in the cave No. 7 records that the emperor was present at the spot in person with his minister in charge of the Department of Peace and War by name Śāba Vīrasena, a resident of Pāṭaliputra, under whose instructions the cave was excavated in order to be dedicated to the god Śaṁbhu. From the wording and the elevated tone of the inscription it would appear that the Gupta emperor was at this time at the height of his power and glory who was here "during his campaign of the conquest of the whole earth". The reference is apparently to the military expedition which the emperor personally conducted against the eastern Satraps. Eastern Malwa with Vidiśā as the general headquarters was the forward base of these operations against the Śakas.² This is apparently the reason why the War Minister, the resident of Pāṭaliputra, was present at Udayagiri as mentioned in the inscription.

1. See Bhandarkar: *Op. cit.*, No. 1541. The inscription reads as follows :—

(L. 1) सिद्धम् (॥) यदन्तर्ज्योतिरवकाभिमुच्यम् (.....
.....) व्यापि चन्द्रगुप्ताख्यमद्भुतम् (॥)

(L. 2) विक्रमावक्रयक्रीता दास्यन्यग्भूतपातिय [वा]
मानसंरक्ता—धर्म (.....) (॥)

(L. 3) तस्य राजाधिराजर्षेरचिन्त्यो [त्साहक] र्मणः अन्वयप्राप्तसाचिव्यो
व्यापृतः सं]वि[वि]ग्रहे (॥)

(L. 4) कौत्सश्शिव इति ख्यातो वीरसेनः कुलाख्यया शब्दार्थन्यायलोकज्ञः
कविः पाटलिपुत्रकः (॥)

(L. 5) कृत्स्नपृथ्वीजयात्येन राज्ञैवेह सहागतः। भक्त्या भगवत्तद्वशम्भोगुहा-
मेतामकारयत् ॥

2. Raychaudhuri: *Political History of Ancient India* (4th Ed.), 467.

The inscription is not dated but is certainly later than the inscription in the preceding cave already referred to above.

The third inscription¹ of the Gupta period is found in the cave No. 20. It refers to the *year 106 of the Gupta Era* (i. e., 425-6 A. D.). The name of the ruling sovereign is not mentioned probably because of the Brāhmanical leaning of the ruling dynasty which the Jainas possibly disliked. Kumāragupta was at this time ruling over the vast empire bequeathed to him by his father Chandragupta II. The inscription in question is one of the few Jain inscriptions of the Gupta period so far discovered. It is obvious that in this period Jainism was on the decline; for "even in great centres of the Jain faith like Mathurā the dedication of Jain images in the Gupta period was a rare event".² No Jain inscription of the time of Samudragupta and Chandragupta II have been discovered so far; and our inscription is the earliest Jain inscription³, so far known, of the Gupta period. It records how Śaṅkara, a devout ascetic, caused to be made "this image of Pārśvanātha, the best of Jainas, (looking) fierce with serpent's hoods expanded (forming a canopy over his head). Śaṅkara is stated to have been a disciple of Āchārya Gośarman, "an ornament of the lineage of Āchārya Bhadra". It is interesting to note that Śaṅkara inherited the noble blood of a warrior and was probably a Kshatriya, for he was a son of a warrior and *aśvapati* (commander of a cavalry regiment). The image described in the inscription is, however, not found in the cave and Fleet suggested that

1. See Bhandarkar : *Op. cit.* See P. 52, fn. 3, below for text.

2. Banerji : *Op. cit.*, 107.

3. Banerji had apparently missed this inscription when he stated that the Mathurā inscription no. G. E. 113 "is the earliest known Jain inscription of the Gupta period."--*Op. cit.*, 103.

the inscription refers to a loose image (*i. e.*, not cut out of rock) which has disappeared now.¹ There is another suggestion by M. B. Garde² that the inscription refers to one of the rock-cut images to the right side of the entrance which according to him shows the hood of a snake, though not the attendant female deity referred to in the inscription. It has been, however, found that this Jain figure is attended by two dwarf figures on both sides and the hood is not what it is described but an umbrella.

The fourth inscription³ is in the cave No. 19. It records that a pilgrim named Kaṇha visited the cave in the year 1093 of the Vikrama Samvat (*i. e.*, 1036-7 A. D.). The really interesting part of this record is the statement in lines 5-8 that the cave was made by Chandragupta and that the reign of Vikramāditya came after that event. The name of the king referred to in this inscription must certainly be taken to be that of the Gupta emperor Chandragupta II.⁴ As regards the age of the cave there is no other inscription to show the period to which it may be allotted. If the contents of this inscription be relied upon, this cave may be assigned to the later part of Chandragupta's reign, a conclusion also supported by architectural peculiarities⁵.

1. *Op. cit.*, 259.

2. *Annual Administration Report, Gwalior Archaeological Department*, 1923-4, Pp. 10-2.

3. Bhandarkar: *Op. cit.*, No. 122; cp. also *IA*, XIII, 185. The text of the inscription is as follows:—

(L. 1) नवो जीर्णोद्वारि (2) कंन्ह प्रणमति (3) वीष्णुपादौ नित्यं ।
 (4) संवत् १०९३ (5) चंद्रगुप्तेन की (6) तनं कीर्तितः । (7) पश्चात् वीर
 (8) मादित्य राज्यः ।

4. *IA*, XIV, 352.

5. *Annual Administration Report, Gwalior Arch. Dept.*, 1931-2, 17-8.

The remaining eight inscriptions are devoid of any historical interest. Of them five are in Gupta script, all of them fragmentary and illegible, except that in one of them on the ceiling in the cave No. 1 the name Śivāditya, probably of a mason, can be made out with some difficulty. The other four contain a few letters only. Out of the rest three, one is in incorrect Sanskrit written in Nāgarī script in a natural rock cavern near cave No. 20.¹ It contains a prayer to a goddess and is of little historical interest. The other two inscriptions² are very recent belonging to the last century written in Hindi.

Conclusion.—A review of these monuments of the Udayagiri hill obviously leads us to the conclusion that (with the exception of the very few early Buddhist remains, the sculptures of Mahishamardini of a rather doubtful date and a few of the later unimportant inscriptions) most of them belong to one age, *i. e.*, to the Gupta period. It may be further asserted that a majority of them belong to the time of Chandragupta II, the only exceptions being possibly the cave No. 1 and certainly the cave No. 20, the former indicating probably a slightly earlier date and the latter a later date of 426 A. D., thus, belonging to the time of Chandragupta's successor Kumāragupta I.

The origin of these monuments was undoubtedly due to the efforts of the citizens of Vidiśā. What the Sanchi monuments were to the inhabitants of the city in the early Buddhist period the Udayagiri caves were to them in the Gupta period. The citizens now did not much favour Buddhism and instead ardently devoted themselves to the faith of their ruling sovereigns, the Guptas, some of whom were devout Vaiṣṇavites. The existence

1. *Ibid*, 1928-9, P. 29.

2. *Ibid*.

of preponderantly larger number of Vaishṇava sculptures at Udayagiri was due to this fact of the city's history. It should, however, be noted that the architecturally important caves were dedicated to the god Śiva; for side by side with Vaishṇavism Śaivism flourished. The līṅga was worshipped as well as the goddess Durgā and the Seven Mothers. The god Skanda Kārttikeya, too, had attained the rank of a first-rate deity. Gaṇeśa, however, was struggling to achieve that eminence though he had still some time to succeed to that end. Jainism, too, had some adherents in the city, as there are some of them even now in the modern town of Bhilsa, but the position of the solitary Jain cave on the north-east corner of the hill would suggest that it was comparatively a neglected faith.

The monuments further throw interesting side-lights on some aspects of the social life of the people occupying the region. The particularly beautiful dancing scene in the Varāha cave No. 5 and a number of musical instruments depicted in the sculptures and in the decoration of the door-frame in cave No. 4 display a particular artistic taste on the part of the people of the region if not of the inhabitants of the city. Of the musical instruments the most notable are the vīṇā, the flute, the sārāṅgī and the mṛidaṅga. The dress and ornaments of the dvārapālas may be indicative of the personal out-fit of the gentry of the surrounding region, if not also of the aristocracy. They wore a simple dhoti, with an under-garment—the rest of the body uncovered—and ornaments such as armlets and necklaces. The girdle of ornamented chains round the waist of goddess Pṛithvī in the Varāha scene may be suggestive of its use by high class ladies. The dress and ornaments of the Nāga king and Varuṇa in the same

some probably indicate the personal embellishments of the princes who wore a simple dhoti and an upper garment and a simple mukuṭa or crown, a necklace and armlets.

The inscription in the cave No. 6 suggests that the region was occupied by a tribe called Sanakāṇikas who are also referred to in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta.¹ It was a republican tribe subjugated by Samudragupta and its chief in the time of Chandragupta II either paid homage to the Gupta emperor or became a subordinate officer under his government. Evidently their older institution was on the decline or probably ceased to exist.²

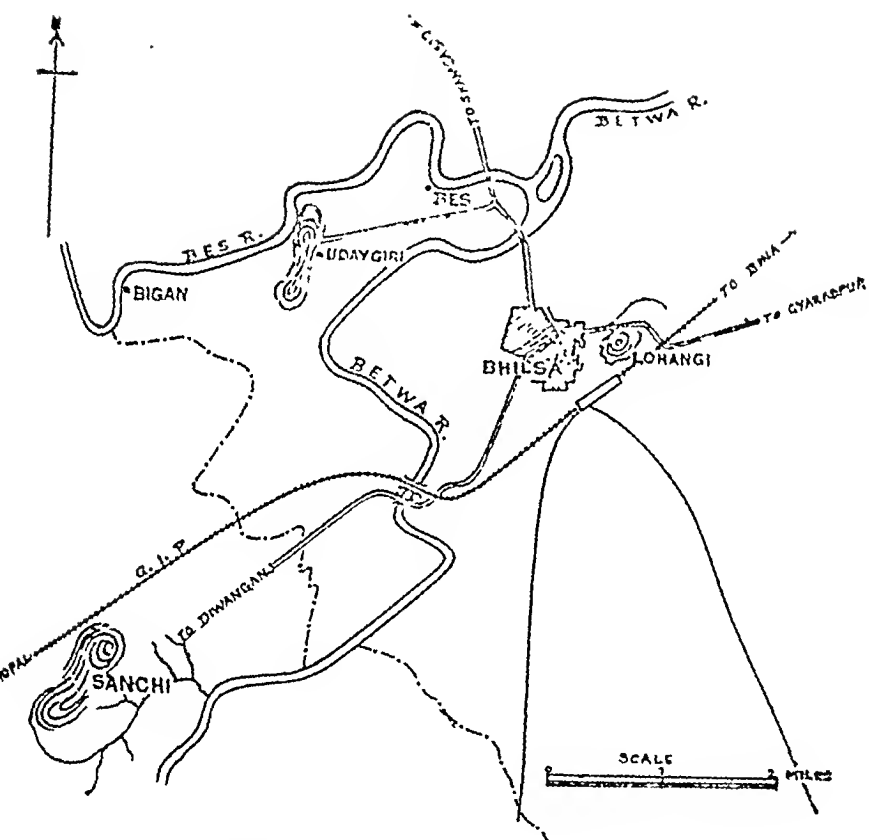
1. *Journal of the Asiatic Society* (2nd Edition), 155, 165.

2. *Ibid.*, 162-3.

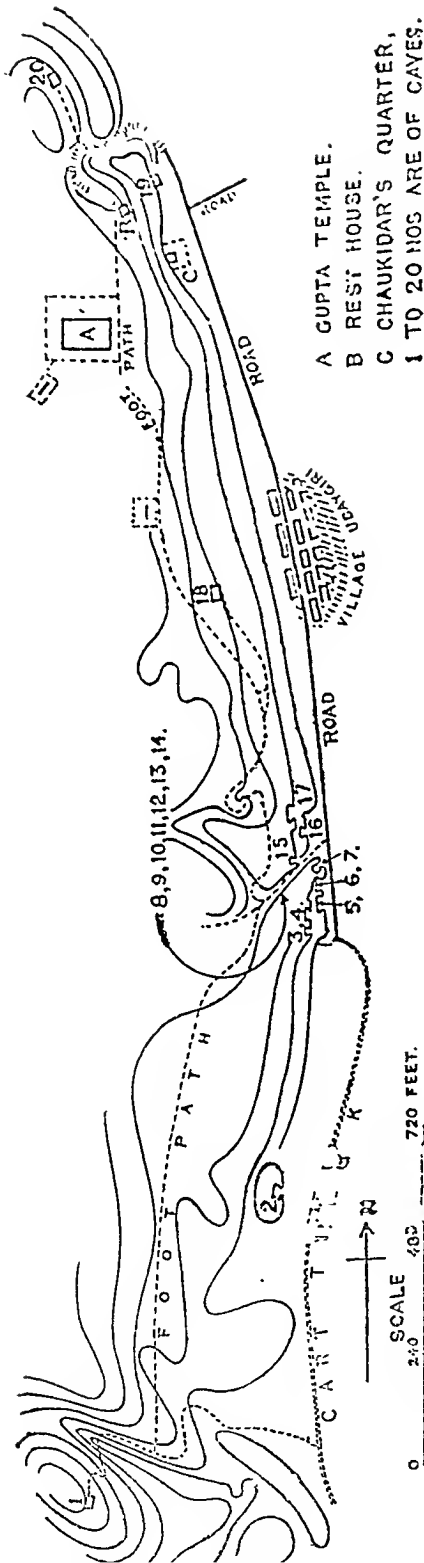
3. The text of the inscription in cave No. 20 is:—

१. नमः सिद्धेभ्यः (॥) श्रीमत्तानां गणतान्त्रिकानां गुणान्वयानां नृपनत्तमानां
२. नमो कृष्णवर्णविश्वरूपानां परमिष्यन्ते वपुर्गतेनमाने (॥) मुक्तार्त्तिके बहुलदिनेषु
पञ्चमे
३. गुह्यमग्रे नन्दयित्वा नन्दानिमा जिनश्रियो जिनवत्पारस्वनेशिकां जिनाकृतिं गम-
यन्मान—
४. चोत्तरम् (॥) आनात्यंभद्रान्वयभूषणस्य शिष्यो ह्यभावाव्यंकुलोद्गतस्य
आनात्ययोगीश—
५. मंगुलेन्मुनन्तु पद्मावतावरणपनेष्टमन्त्र्य (॥) परैरजेयस्य रिपुघ्नमानिनस्तत्संधि—
६. नृत्सेन्यभिषिञ्चन्तो भवि स्वयंजया मकरनामगन्दिनी विधानयुक्तं यतिमा—
७. मंगमास्थितः (॥) न उत्तराणां नदयो कुरुणां उददिशादेशवरे प्रसूतः
८. क्षयाय कर्म्मार्तिगणस्य धोमान यदत्र पुण्यं तःसातसज्जं (॥)

PLATE I.

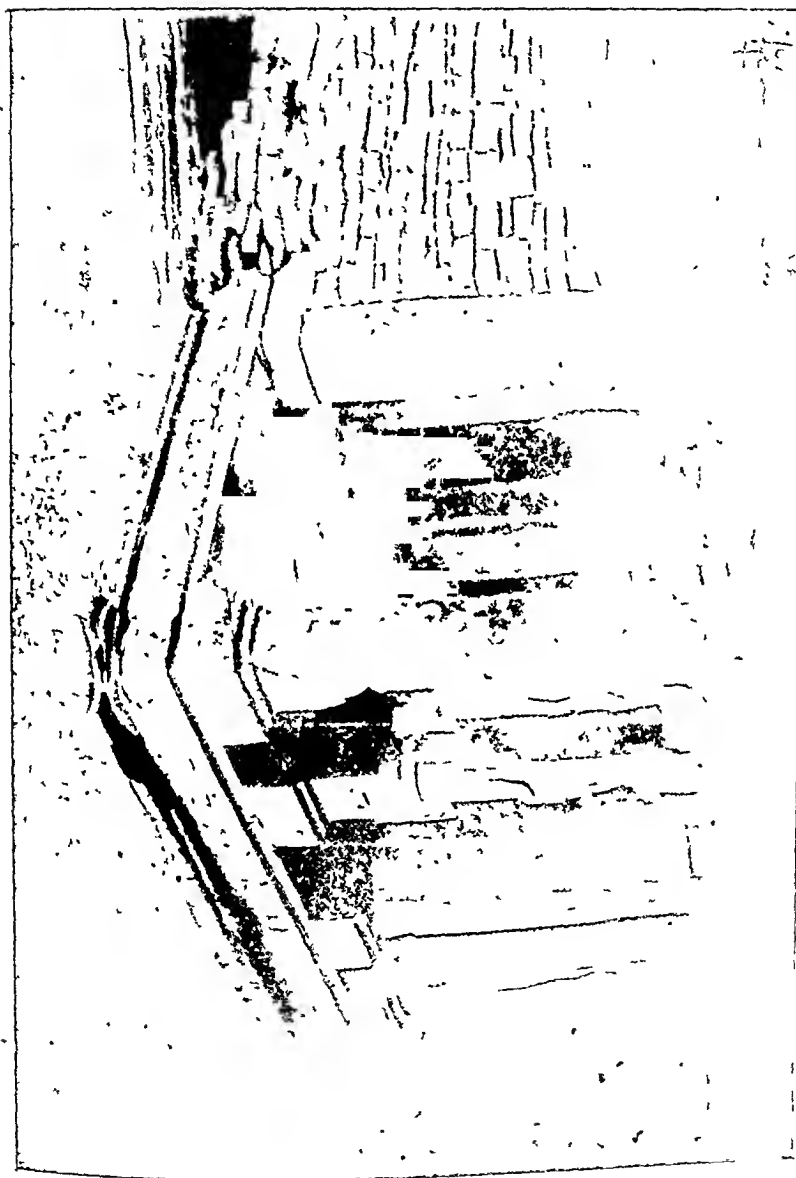


Udaygiri and its environs.



Udaygiri caves, site plan.

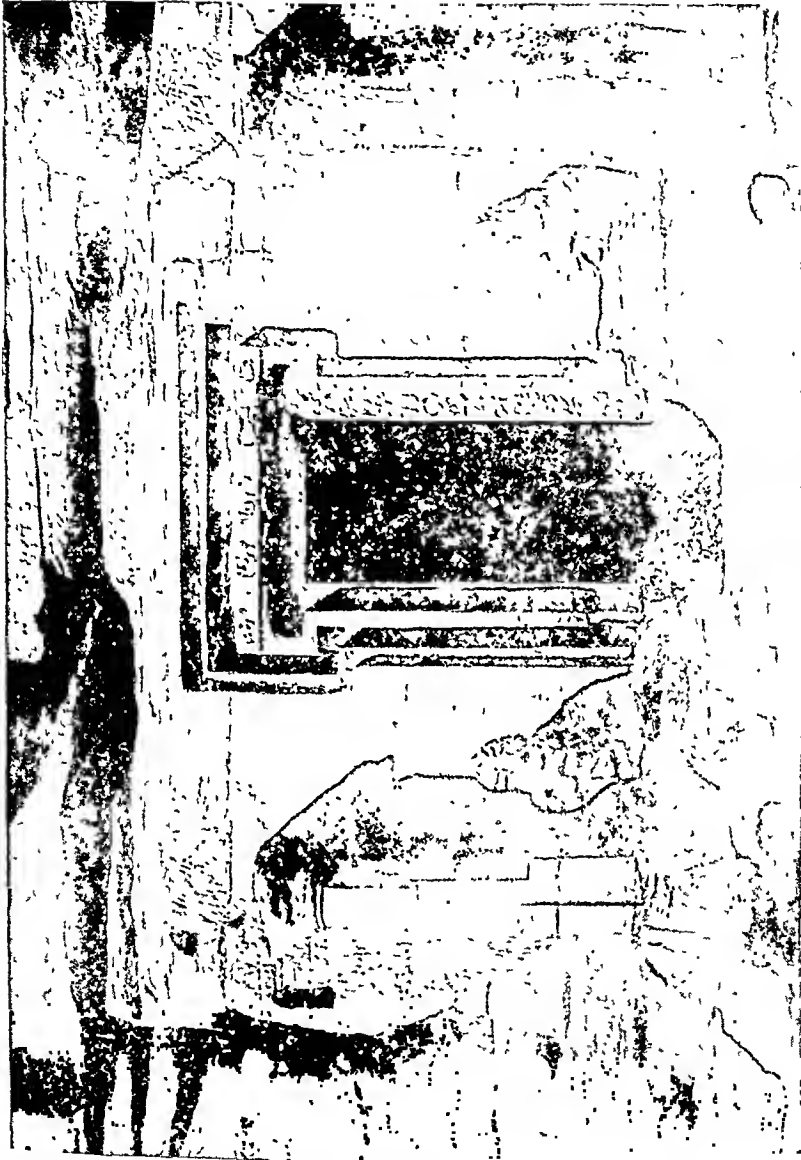
PLATE III.



Gave No. 1.



Cave No. 3, Image of Sunda.



Cave No. 4, Front view.



Cave No. 4, Linga with one face.

PLATE VII.

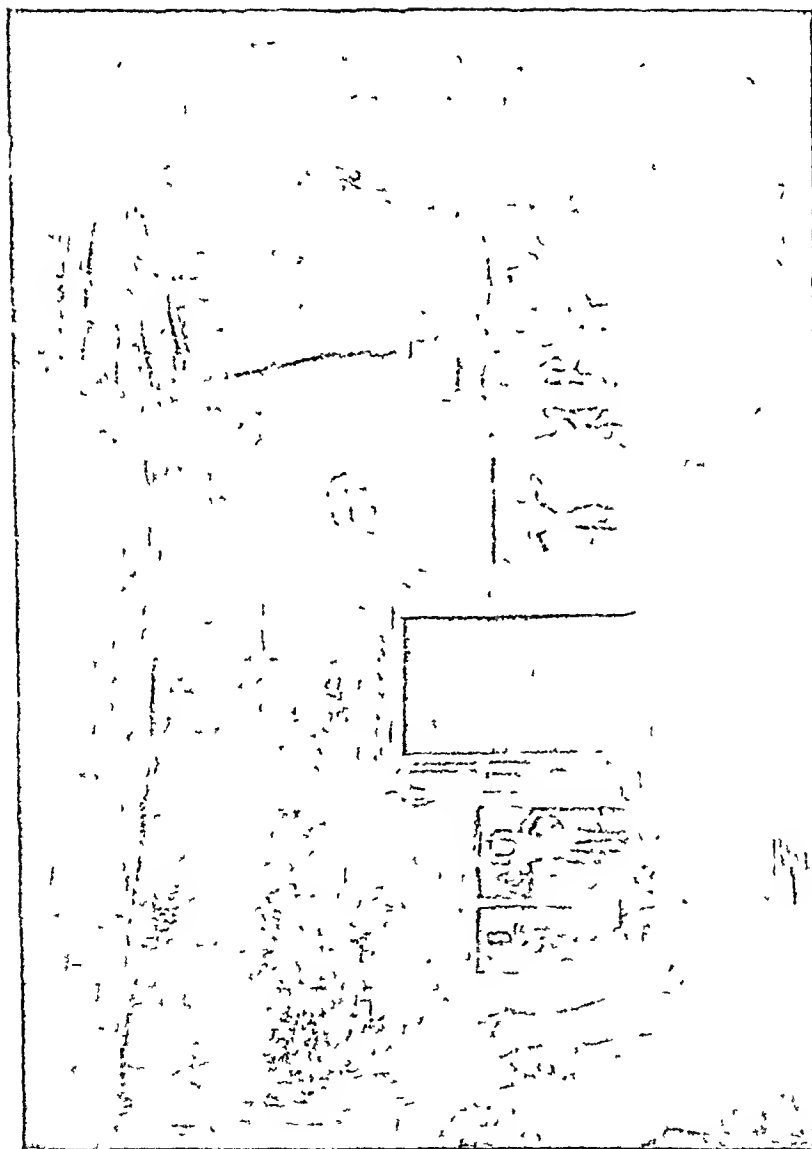


Cave No. 5, Image of Varāha.



Cave No. 5, Gaṣṣā Yamunā and Varuṇa.

PLATE IX.



Cave No. 6, Front view.

PLATE X.



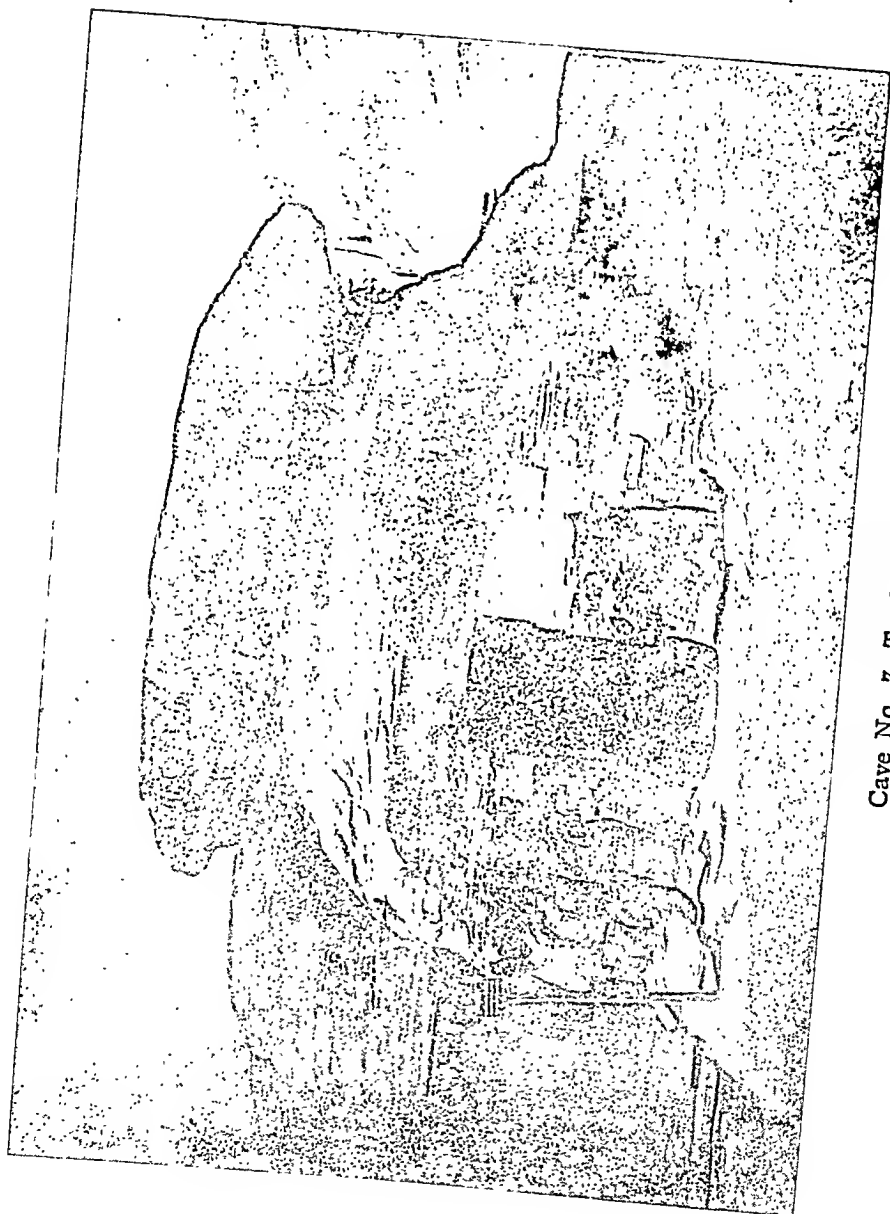
Civo No. 6, Dwārapāla and Viṣṇu.

PLATE XI.



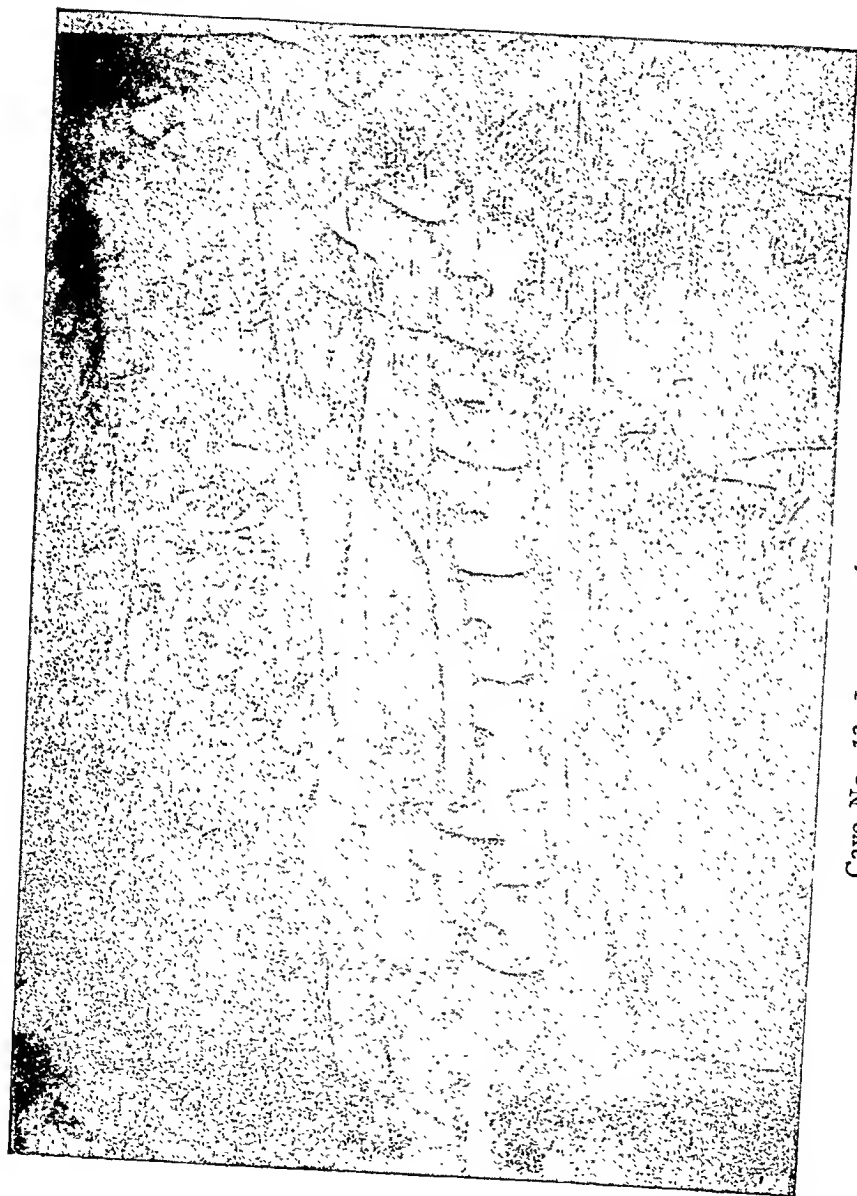
Cave No. 6, Image of Gaṇeśa.

PLATE XII.



Cave No. 7, Tawā cave.

PLATE XIII.

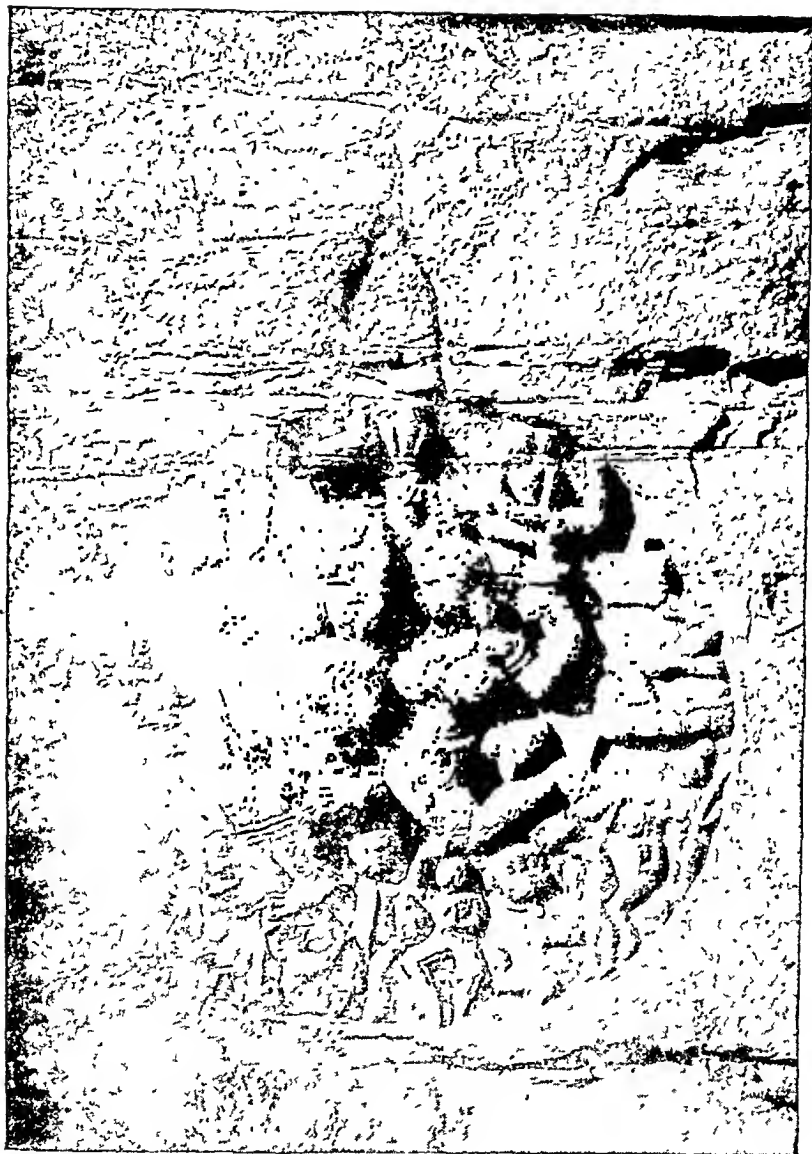


Cave No. 13, Image of Śeṣaśāyī Viṣṇu.

PLATE XIV.

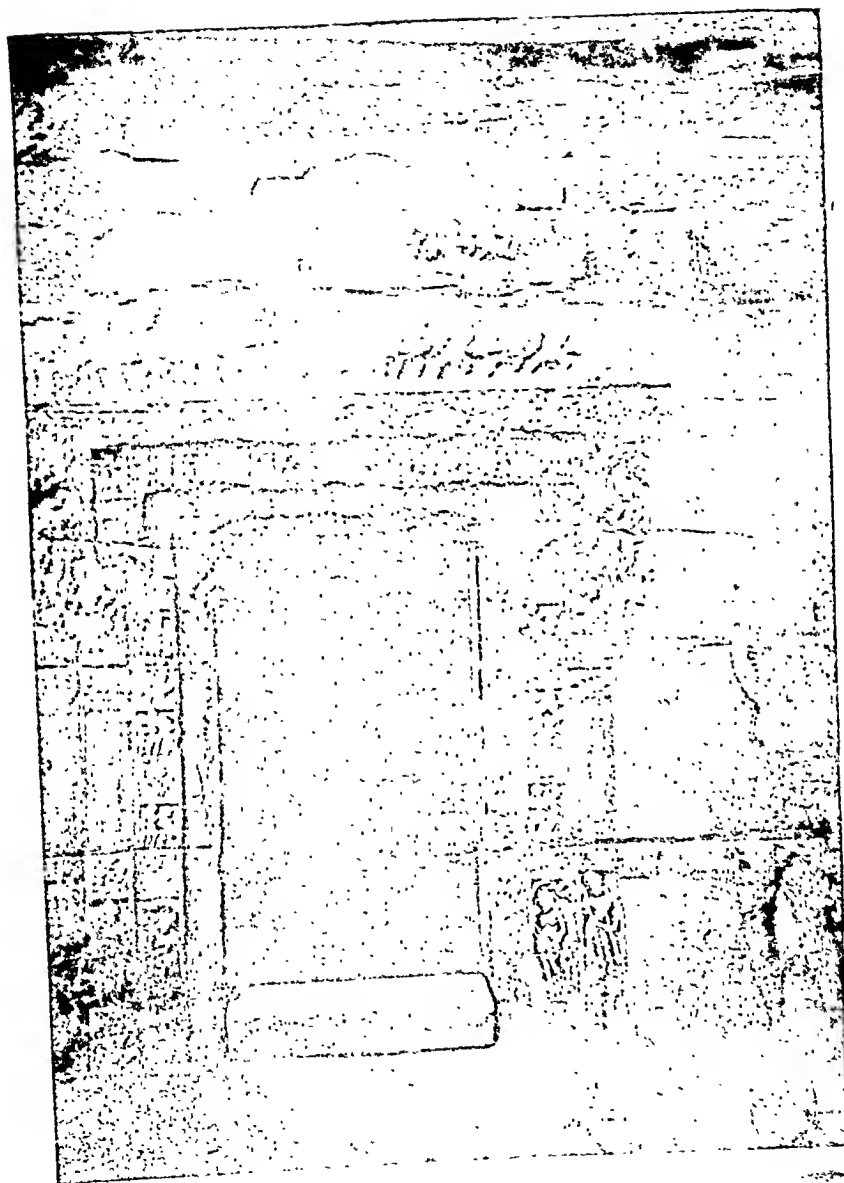


Cave No. 17, General view.



A Medallion in rock having Śiva and Pārvatī.

PLATE XVI.



Cave No. 19, Doorway.